

Touching the Heart - Study Notes

//Parable of the sower/soil

Matthew 13:1-9 - The parable

Matthew 13:18-23 - The explanation

Jesus is indirectly answering the challenge brought in Matthew 12:38. He is bringing clarity to the role of the messiah. Not by force was the kingdom of God to prevail, but by the implanting of a new principle in the hearts of men.

Although we call this the parable of the sower, it really has more to do with the ground, that's the focus. The sower and the seed doesn't change in these examples, it is only the ground that is different. How is the Word received? What do we do with it once we have heard it.

Christ's Object Lessons 43.2

That with which the parable of the sower chiefly deals is the effect produced on the growth of the seed by the soil into which it is cast. By this parable Christ was virtually saying to His hearers, It is not safe for you to stand as critics of My work, or to indulge disappointment because it does not meet your ideas. The question of greatest importance to you is, How do you treat My message? Upon your reception or rejection of it your eternal destiny depends.

Part of the mission of the messiah is to implant the Word in our hearts so that we can be changed by Him. This, after all is the new covenant (Hebrews 8:10, Jeremiah 31:33)

Two key takeaways from the parable are:

- A casual interaction with the Word won't change us.
- If we want to be the good ground hearers and produce fruit, we need to be like that loose fertile soil, that receives the Word, holds on to it and interacts with it.

Reason #2 to memorise scripture - It allows us to meditate on God's Word

If anyone had the excuse of being too busy to give time to devotion, perhaps it would have been Joshua. But notice what God instructs him - Joshua 1:8

Steps to Christ - Page 90

One passage studied until its significance is clear to the mind and its relation to the plan of salvation is evident, is of more value than the perusal of many chapters with no definite purpose in view and no positive instruction gained. Keep your Bible with you. As you have opportunity, read it; fix the texts in your memory. Even while you are walking the streets you may read a passage and meditate upon it, thus fixing it in the mind.

Notice what the very beginning of the book of Psalms reads - Psalm 1:1-3

In this passage we are shown in verse 1 the life of evil, what not to do. Notice the progression, walking, standing and sitting. David tells us we don't want to head down that path.



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Instead, what does he tell us to do in verse 2?
(See also Psalm 16:7, Psalm 119:16, John 6:27)

By an interesting turn of events memorising the word enables us to meditate and dwell on it. At the same time meditating, that is chewing it over, thinking on it enables us to memorise it. It has been said: "What touches the heart is engraved in the memory." Being able to meditate on a verse is not only a reason for memorising, but it is also a tip to help you to memorise.

//Tips to memorisation

#3. Learn to Meditate.

We can meditate on a passage by asking ourselves these questions:

- Who is speaking in the verse, and to whom?
- What are they trying to communicate—and why?
- What makes this verse important?
- Try emphasizing individual words in a verse. What meaning does each key word contribute to the verse? Which words stand out to you?
- Draw connections between this verse and others. What light do they shed on each other?
- Which other verses does this remind you of? (This will get easier as you learn more verses.)

Say the verse back to God in prayer, and talk to Him about what it really means. And specifically: what it says about you, and what it says about Him. Use the verse to explore your relationship with God.

#4. Apply the Word (James 1:22)

Goals. Does this verse have any bearing on your goals? Your direction in life? The things you are working toward? Perhaps it will suggest ways to move forward toward a goal, or it may suggest altering, or even eliminating a goal.

Decisions. All of us face challenging decisions at times. Does this verse shed light on any decisions you are facing? Does it point to some choice you should make?

Lifestyle. Think through your daily schedule. Your habits, patterns, and routines. Can you think of ways to change your lifestyle—that would bring it more into harmony with the verse ?

Problems. Are you experiencing any difficulties or irritations? Perhaps the verse will suggest solutions. Look for answers to the perplexing problems of your life.

Ask God to impress you with at least one application for every verse you memorize—something small you can do to help build that verse into your life. Try to make sure that these applications are clearly connected to the verse you are memorizing, that they are specific, and that they are small enough to be carried out that day or soon thereafter.